

## **SL7: SOVIET AND RUSSIAN CINEMA**



**Course convenors 2023-2024  
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## **Contents of Handbook**

<b>1. Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Texts and Primary Sources</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Topic Outlines</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. Teaching and Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5. Lecture schedule (and core viewing for lectures)</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>6. Supervision schedule and essay titles</b>	

## THE PAPER

This course investigates the history of Soviet and Russian cinema from its beginnings in the early 20th century through the present: from early silent comedies and melodramas to the emergence of the avant-garde in the 1920s; from Stalinist blockbusters of the 1930s through the Soviet 'New Wave' of the 1960s; from the tumultuous changes of the *glasnost*' era through the postmodern challenges of the present. The paper encourages students to explore the work of one or more directors in depth, but it also asks students to think comparatively about the evolution of filmmaking practices, genres and themes across historical periods and changes in political regime. In addition to exploring historical contexts and aesthetic qualities of the films, the course will provide background in elements of film form, pairing the films with essential readings in film theory and criticism.

This course is open to students in both Part IB and Part II; it does not assume any prior study of film, but it students will be expected to read a wide range of critical, historical and theoretical texts (in both English and Russian) as essential context for the films under discussion.

Topics for 2023-24 are the following:

- 1. Revolutionary Film Culture: From Boulevard to Avant-Garde**
- 2. From Silence to Sound: Eisenstein, Vertov and the Factory of the Eccentric Actor**
- 3. The Other Soviet Classics: Popular Cinema in the Stalin Era**
- 4. Soviet Cinema After Stalin: Rewriting the Past, Confronting the Present**
- 5. Russian Cinema from Perestroika to the Present**

## TEXTS

Films are the primary texts for this course, supplemented with excerpts (in Russian, but often with English translations) from filmmakers' writings and contemporary critics responses to these works. Many but not all films will be available with English or Russian subtitles. You may watch films online (by following the links already posted on CamTools) or by checking disks out of the MML library. If there is significant student interest, we will arrange group screenings of the most significant films assigned for the course: watching on a big screen always gives you a better sense of a film's visual composition. In some instances published scenarios or shooting scripts are available for the films we will study; these will reduce the linguistic challenge that working with film may present. Secondary reading will include critical, historical and theoretical texts.

Each topic below is followed by a list of the films that may be discussed in lectures and supervisions. You are NOT expected to study every film listed here, but you are expected to watch *at least 4* of the films identified as 'core viewing' for each topic in order to develop a broad range of reference for the paper as a whole. Try to watch as many as you can over the summer: most are available on YouTube, sometimes even with subtitles (links are posted in the relevant folder on CamTools). Browsing the recommended background and secondary reading will help you select which films you most want (and need) to watch.

### ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND READING:

**Kaes, Anton and Eric Rentschler, "Reading a Film Sequence". [please read before the first lecture]**

Bordwell, David and Thompson, Kristin. *Film Art: An Introduction* [skim to acquire a basic grasp of the techniques and terminology of film analysis; many very inexpensive used editions of this text are available for sale on line from places like amazon; any edition is fine for our purposes: the updates simply use more recent film examples. Make sure that you purchase 'Film Art: An Introduction', not 'Film History: An Introduction']

Beumers, Birgit. *A History of Russian Cinema* [skim to get a broad sense of the principal developments and debates in Russian and Soviet cinema]

### ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND READING (each of these is a key reference work for at least one of the five topics):

Beumers, Birgit, ed., *Companion to Russian Cinema* (Wiley Blackwall, 2016): this is an expensive book, so should not be bought, but you may find it a useful point of reference over the course).

Tsivian, Yuri. *Early Cinema in Russia and Its Cultural Reception*

Gillespie, David. *Early Soviet Cinema: Innovation, Ideology and Propaganda*

Widdis, Emma. *Visions of a New Land: Soviet Film from the Revolution to the Second World War*

Woll, Josephine. *Real Images: Soviet Cinema and the Thaw*

Condee, Nancy. *The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema*

Condee, Nancy, Alexander Prokhorov, and Elena Prokhorova, *Cinemasaurus: Russian Film in Contemporary Context* (Academic Studies Press, 2020)  
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/CAM/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=6134207>

A short list of additional recommended background reading is appended to the descriptions of each topic below. You will find many shorter texts already posted on the course Moodle site; more will be added in the coming months.

## TOPICS

### 1. Revolutionary Film Culture: From Boulevard to Avant-Garde

This topic focuses on the ways in which the first Russian filmmakers sought to reconcile popular tastes with political imperatives, both before and after the revolution. It will address questions of genre, silent film form, early film performance practices, the influence of Western models and innovations in film editing techniques (i.e. *montazh*). [Note that ALL of the films to be studied for this topic are silent and many of them are very short.]

#### *Core viewing:*

Evgenii Bauer, *Grezy* (Fantasies, 1915); *Zhizn' za zhizn'* (A Life for a Life, 1916), *Posle smerti* (1915).

Eisenstein, *Stachka* (Strike, 1925); *Bronenosets Potemkin* (Battleship Potemkin, 1925)

Protazanov, *Aelita* (1924)

Kuleshov, *Neobychnyie prikliucheniia mistera vesta v strane bolshevikov* (Extraordinary Adventures of Mister West in the Land of the Bolsheviks, 1924)

Pudovkin, *Shakhmatnaia goriachka* (Chess Fever, 1925); *Mat'* (Mother, 1926)

Kozintsev and Trauberg, *Shinel'* (1926), *Novyi vavilon* (New Babylon, 1929)

Ermler, *Oblomok Imperii* (Fragment of an Empire, 1929)

#### *Core reading:*

Eisenstein, 'The Montage of Attractions' (1923); 'The Montage of Film Attractions' (1924)

Kuleshov 'Americaniitis', 'The Principles of Montage'; other short texts

Kozintsev, Trauberg et al., 'The Eccentric Manifesto' (1922)

#### *Additional films:*

Barnet, *Dom na Trubnoi* (House on Trubnaia Street, 1928)

Bauer, *Revoliutsioner* (The Revolutionary, 1917); *Umiraiushchii lebed'* (The Dying Swan, 1917))

Pudovkin, *Konets Sankt-Peterburga* (The End of St. Petersburg, 1927); *Potomok Chingiz Khana* (Storm Over Asia, 1928)

Room, *Tret'ia meshchanskaia* (Bed and Sofa, 1927)

Slavinskii, *Baryshnia i khuligan* (The Young Lady and the Hooligan, 1918)

#### *Recommended background reading:*

Christie, Ian and Taylor, Richard (eds), *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents, 1896-1939*. London and NY: Routledge, 1994.

Tsivian, Yuri. *Early Cinema in Russia and Its Cultural Reception*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998.

Youngblood, Denise J. *The Magic Mirror: Moviemaking in Russia, 1908-1918*

Youngblood, Denise. *Movies for the Masses: Popular Cinema and Soviet Society in the 1920s*

Key theoretical sources:

- Doane, Mary Ann. "Melodrama, Temporality, Recognition: American and Russian Silent Cinema." *East-West: Film Journal* 4.2 (June 1990): 69-89.
- Gaines, Jane. "Revolutionary Theory/Prerevolutionary Melodrama." *Discourse* 17.3 (Spring 1995): 101-118.
- Grieverson, Lee, and Peter Kramer. *The Silent Cinema Reader*. 1 edition. Routledge, 2003.

Key background sources on the period:

- Kapterev, Sergei. 'Mezhdu novym I starym svetom. Nekotorye problemy kul'turnogo konteksta sovetskogo nemogo kino.'
- <http://pub.unibielefeld.de/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=2305017&fileId=2305058>
- Kenez, Peter. *Cinema and Soviet Society, 1917-1953*. NY: Cambridge UP, 1992.
- Listov, Viktor. "Early Soviet Cinema: the spontaneous and the planned, 1917-1924." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 11.2 (1991): 121-127. *Stockholm Studies in Russian Literature* 11. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell Intl, 1979. 237-263.
- Taylor, Richard and Ian Christie, eds. *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents, 1896-1939*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1988. particularly documents 8-11, 13, 22, 39-40.
- Taylor, Richard. "Agitation, Propaganda and the Cinema: The Search for New Solutions, 1917-1921." *Art, Society, Revolution: Russia, 1917-1921*. Ed. Nils Ake Nilsson.
- . "The Birth of the Soviet Cinema." *Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution*. Ed. Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985.
- Tsivian, Yuri. *Early Cinema in Russia and its Cultural Reception*. Tr. Alan Bodger. Ed. Richard Taylor. London: Routledge, 1994.
- . "Early Russian Cinema: Some Observations." *Inside the Film Factory: New Approaches to Russian and Soviet Cinema*. Ed. Richard Taylor and Ian Christie. London: Routledge, 1991.
- Immaterial Bodies*. CD-ROM (offers illustrated overview and analysis of silent cinema acting and filming style.
- Yangirov, Rashit. "Soviet Cinema in the Twenties: national alternatives." Trans. Richard Taylor. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 11.2 (1991): 129-139.
- Youngblood, Denise J. *The Magic Mirror: Moviemaking in Russia, 1908-1918*. Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1999.
- Youngblood, Denise Jeanne. *Soviet Cinema in the Silent Era, 1918-1935*. University of Texas Press, 1991.

On Bauer:

- Boele, O. F., O. F. Boele, 1016510, and Faculteit der Geesteswetenschappen. "After Death, the Movie (1915) - Ivan Turgenev, Evgenii Bauer and the Aesthetics of Morbidity." <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/16319>.
- DeBlasio, Alyssa. "Choreographing Space, Time, and Dikovinki in the Films of Evgenii Bauer." *The Russian Review* 66, no. 4 (2007): 671-692. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9434.2007.00464.x.
- Grieverson, Lee, and Peter Kramer. *The Silent Cinema Reader*. Routledge, 2003.

- Morley, Rachel. "Gender Relations in the Films of Evgenii Bauer." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 81, no. 1 (January 1, 2003): 32–69. doi:10.2307/4213623.
- Louise McReynolds, "Demanding Men, Desiring Women, and Social Collapse in the Films of Evgenii Bauer, 1913-1917", *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*, vol 3, issue 2 (2009). [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1386/srsc.3.2.145\\_1](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1386/srsc.3.2.145_1)

#### On Kuleshov:

- Kepley, Vance Jr. "The Kuleshov Workshop." *L'Effet Koulechov/The Kuleshov Effect. Iris* 4.1 (1986): 5-24.
- . "Mr. Kuleshov in the Land of the Modernists." *The Red Screen: Politics, Society, Art in Soviet Cinema*. Ed. Anna Lawton. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Kuleshov, Lev. *Kuleshov on Film*. Tr. Ronald Levaco. Berkeley: U of CA P, 1974.
- . *Selected Works: Fifth Years in Films*. Trans. Dmitri Agrachov and Nina Belennkaya. Moskva: Raduga, 1987.
- . *Osnovy kino rezhissury*. Moskva: Goskinoizdat, 1941 [repub: Moskva: VGIK, 1995].
- . *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*. [2 volumes published]. Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1987-8.
- Petric, Vlada. "A Subtextual Reading of Kuleshov's Satire *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (1924)." *Inside Soviet Film Satire: Laughter with a Lash*. Ed. Andrew Horton. NY: Cambridge UP, 1993.
- Sokolov, V. S. "K teoreticheskim istolkovaniiam 'effekta Kuleshova'." *Kinovedcheskie zapiski*. 6 (1990): 26-62.
- Yampolsky, Mikhail. "Kuleshov's Experiments and the New Anthropology of the Actor." *Silent Film*. Ed. Richard Abel. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1996.

#### On Protazanov:

- Christie, Ian. "Down to Earth: Aelita Relocated." *Inside the Film Factory: New Approaches to Russian and Soviet Cinema*. Ed. Richard Taylor and Ian Christie. London: Routledge, 1991.
- Christie, Ian and Julian Graffy, eds. *Yakov Protazanov and the Continuity of Russian Cinema*. London: BFI/NFT, 1993.
- Youngblood, Denise. "Iakov Protazanov, the 'Russian Griffith'." *Movies for the Masses: Popular Cinema and Soviet Society in the 1920s*. By Denise Youngblood. NY: Cambridge UP, 1992.
- Zorkaia, Neia. "Iakov Protazanov i sovetskoe kinoiskusstvo 20-kh godov." *Voprosy kinoiskusstva* 6 (1962): 165-91.

## **2. From Silence to Sound: Eisenstein, Vertov and FEKS (the Factory of the Eccentric Actor)**

This module explores the work of Sergei Eisenstein and two avant-garde 'collectives': Dziga Vertov's 'Film Eye' group, and the Factory of the Eccentric Actor (Grigorii Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg and others), focusing on the ways in which they navigated



the transition from silent to sound cinema, and also how each adapted to the changed political and artistic constraints of the 1930s. Films will be studied in the context of each director's theoretical writings and contemporary critical debates.

*Core viewing:*

Eisenstein, *Bronenosets Potemkin* (1925); *Ivan Groznyi*, Parts 1 and 2 (Ivan the Terrible, 1944-1946)  
 Vertov, *Chelovek s kinoapparatom* (Man with a Movie Camera, 1929); *Entuziasm* (Enthusiasm, 1930); *Tri pesni o Lenin* (Three Songs about Lenin, 1932)  
 Kozintsev and Trauberg, *Odna* (Alone, 1931)

*Core reading:*

Short texts by Eisenstein, Vertov and Kozintsev (posted on Moodle)

*Additional films:*

Eisenstein, *Oktiabr'* (1927); *General'naia liniia* (The General Line, 1929); *Aleksandr Nevskii* (1938)  
 Vertov, *Shestaia chast' mira* (Sixth Part of the World, 1926); *Odinnadtsatyi* (The Eleventh Year, 1928)

*Recommended background reading:*

Bordwell, David. *The Cinema of Eisenstein*  
 Gillespie, David. *Early Soviet Cinema: Innovation, Ideology and Propaganda*.  
 Hicks, Jeremy. *Dziga Vertov: Defining Documentary Film*.  
 Nesbet, Anne. *Savage Junctures: Sergei Eisenstein and the Shape of Thinking*  
 Taylor, Richard (ed.), *The Poetics of Cinema*

Kaganovsky, Lilya, *the Voice of Technology: Soviet Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1928-1935*. Indiana, 2018. [contains chapters on FEKS' *Odna*, Vertov].  
 Neia Zorkaia, "Odna' na perekrestakh," *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* 74: 143-158.

### **3. The Other Soviet Classics: Popular Cinema in the Stalin Era**

This topic looks at the classics of Socialist Realist filmmaking, focusing on popular genres: the musical, the romantic comedy, the melodrama and the war film. Lectures will explore the ways in which these films both conform to and deviate from the norms of classical Hollywood narrative cinema. Lectures will also address the construction of a distinctively Soviet subject position; gendered narratives; cinematic Lenins and Stalins; laughter and terror.

*Core viewing:*

Abram Room, *Strogii iunosha* (1936)  
 Barnet, *Okraina* (Outskirts, 1933); *U samogo sinego moria* (By The Bluest Sea, 1936)  
 Vasil'ev Brothers, *Chapaev* (1934)  
 Aleksandrov, *Tsirk* (Circus, 1936), *Svetlyi put'* (Bright Path, 1938), *Volga-Volga* (1938), *Vesna* (Spring, 1947)  
 Raizman, *Letchiki* (Pilots, 1935); *Mashen'ka* (1942)

Pyr'ev, *Partiinyi bilet* (Party Card, 1936); *Traktoristy* (Tractor Drivers, 1939), *Svinarka i Pastukh* (The Swinemaid and the Shepherd, 1941)  
 Iudin, *Devushka s kharakterom* (A Girl with Character, 1939)  
 Kheifitz and Zarkhi, *Chlen pravitel'stva* (A Member of the Government, 1939)  
 Romm, *Lenin v 1918 g.* (1939, Lenin in 1918)  
 Kalatozov, *Valerii Chkalov* (1939)  
 Donskoi, *Kak zakalialas' stal'* (1942); *Nepokorennnye* (The Undeclared, 1945)  
 Ermler, *Ona zashchishchaet rodinu* (She defends the Motherland, 1943)  
 Timoshenko, *Nebesnyi tikhokhod* (Celestial Slowpoke, 1945)  
 Stolper, *Povest' o nastoiashchem cheloveke* (Tale about a Real Man, 1948)  
 Chiaureli, *Padenie Berlina* (1949, Fall of Berlin)

*Core reading:*

Transcripts from film studio and party discussions of *Chapaev*, *Tsirk*, and *Nebesnyi tikhokhod*.

Eisenstein, Sergei, Vsevolod Pudovkin, and Grigory Alexandrov, "A Statement on Sound" *Film Factory: The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents 1896-1939*, eds. Richard Taylor, Ian Christie (Taylor & Francis, 2012): 234-235

[https://discover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_CON\\_TRImig10000221201&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20search%20Engine&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,christie%20film%20factory&offset=0](https://discover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_CON_TRImig10000221201&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20search%20Engine&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,christie%20film%20factory&offset=0)

*Additional films:*

Aleksandrov, *Veselye rebiata* (Jolly Fellows, 1934)  
 Barnet, *Podvig Razvedchika* (The Secret Agent's Triumph, 1948)  
 Donskoi, *Raduga* (The Rainbow, 1944)  
 Medvedkin, *Novaia Moskva* (New Moscow, 1938)  
 Pyr'ev, *Skazanie o zemle sibirskoi* (Tale of the Siberian Lands, 1948); *Kubanskiye Kazaki* (Cossacks of the Kuban, 1950);  
 Romm, *Lenin v Oktiabre* (Lenin in October, 1937)  
 Savchenko, *Garmon'* (The Accordion, 1934)

*Recommended background reading for this topic:*

Dobrenko, Evgenii. *Stalinist Cinema and the Production of History*.

Kaganovsky, Lilya. *How the Soviet Man was Unmade: Cultural Fantasy and Male Subjectivity under Stalin*.

Kenez, Peter, *Cinema and Soviet Society, 1917-1953*

Miller, Jamie. *Soviet Cinema: Politics and Persuasion under Stalin*

Taylor, Richard and Derek Spring, eds. *Stalinism and Soviet Cinema*.

Widdis, Emma. *Visions of a New Land: Soviet Film from the Revolution to the Second World War*

*Other optional readings:*

André Bazin, "The Stalin Myth in Soviet Cinema", Vol. 3, No. 1 (Fall, 1978), pp. 17-26

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/44018612>

Boris Shumiatsky, "A Cinema for the Millions" (excerpts), *Film Factory: The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents 1896-1939*, eds. Richard Taylor, Ian Christie (Taylor & Francis, 2012): 358-369  
[https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_CON\\_TRImig10000221201&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,christie%20film%20factory&offset=0](https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_CON_TRImig10000221201&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,christie%20film%20factory&offset=0)

Slavoj Žižek, "Toward the Theory of the Stalinist Musical" from *The Parallax View* (MIT Press, 2006), 288-295

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/CAM/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=3338580>

Jacques Rancière, "Eisenstein's Madness" from *Film Fables* (Bloomsbury, 2016)

[https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_ALMA21295971600003606&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,ranciere%20film%20fables&offset=0](https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_ALMA21295971600003606&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,ranciere%20film%20fables&offset=0)

#### **4. Soviet Cinema After Stalin: Rewriting the Past, Confronting the Present**

This topic examines the ways in which Soviet filmmakers rebelled against the constraints of the Stalin era in both the form and content of their work. It explores revisionist approaches to familiar plots and the emergence of new themes and visual styles. Filmmakers on whose work students may wish to concentrate include: Mikhail Kalatozov, Marlen Khutsiev, Larisa Shepitko, Grigorii Chukhrai, Kira Muratova, El'dar Riazanov, or Andrei Tarkovskii. Alternatively, students may choose to concentrate on themes or formal elements that appear in the work of several filmmakers. These may include, but are not limited to: revisionist approaches to historical subjects; experiments with narrative form; gender trouble; soundscapes; iconoclastic visions of city and/or rural life; generational conflicts; film adaptations of literary texts, etc.

##### *Core viewing:*

Alov and Naumov, *Pavel Korchagin* (1956), *Mir vkhodiashchemu* (Peace to Him who Enters, 1961)

Riazanov, *Karnaval'naia noch'* (1956, *Devushka bez adresa* (The Girl without an Address, 1957)

Khutsiev, *Vesna na zarechnoi ulitse* (1957), *Mne 20 let* (I am 20, 1962-5), *Iul'skii dozhd'* (July Rain, 1966)

Kalatozov, *Letiat zhuravli* (*The Cranes are Flying*, 1957); *Neotpravlennoe pis'mo* (The Unsent Letter, 1959)

Chukhrai, *Ballada o soldate* (Ballad of a soldier, 1959); *Chistoe nebo* (Clear Skies, 1961)

Romm, *Deviat' dnei odnogo goda* (Nine days of a single year, 1961)

Tarkovskii, *Ivanovo detstvo* (1962), *Andrei Rublev* (1967/1971), *Stalker* (1979)

Konchalovskii, *Pervyi uchitel'* (First Teacher, 1965); *Istoriia Asi Kliachinoi, kotoraiia liubila, da ne vyshla zamuzh* (The Story of Asia Kliachina, Who Loved Someone, But Didn't Get Married, 1967)

Shepit'ko, *Kryl'ia* (Wings, 1966)

Muratova, *Korotkie vstrechi* (Brief Encounters, 1967), *Dolgie provody* (Long Farewells, 1971)  
 Askol'dov, *Komissar* (Commissar, 1967)  
 Gaidai, *Brilliantovaia ruka* (The Diamond Arm, 1968)  
 Motyl', *Beloe solntse pustyni* (White Sun of the Desert, 1970)  
 Mikhalkov, *Svoi sredi chuzhikh, chuzhoi sredi svoikh* (At home among strangers, A stranger at home, 1974)  
 Abdrashitov, *Slovo dlia zashchity* (Speech for the Defense, 1977)

*Core reading:*

Contemporary responses to films from 1950s-1970s; scripts; excerpts from Tarkovskii's *Zapechatlennoe vremia*.

*Additional films:*

Bondarchuk, *Sud'ba cheloveka* (Destiny of a Man / Fate of a Man, 1959)  
 Chebotarev and Kazanskii, *Chelovek-amfibiia* (Amphibian Man, 1961)  
 Chukhrai, *Sorok pervyi* (The Forty-first, 1956)  
 Daneliia, *Ia shagaiu po Moskve* (1963)  
 Mikhalkov, *Rodnia* (Kinfolk, 1981)  
 Riazanov, *Beregis' avtomobilia* (Watch out for the Automobile OR Uncommon Thief, 1966)  
 Shepit'ko, *Voskhozhdenie* (The Ascent, 1976)  
 Shpalikov, *Dolgaia schastlivaia zhizn'* (A Long Happy Life, 1966)  
 Tarkovskii, *Zerkalo* (Mirror, 1974); *Solaris* (1972)

*Recommended background reading:*

Bird, Robert. *Andrei Rublev*. BFI, 2008.  
 Bird, Robert. *Andrei Tarkovsky: Elements of Cinema*. Reaktion, 2008.  
 Gillespie, David C. "Autobiography, Memory and Identity in the Films of Andrei Tarkovsky" from *Russian Cinema* (Abingdon, Oxon : Routledge, 2014)  
[https://discover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_ALMA51620829280003606&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20search%20Engine&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,Autobiography,%20Memory%20and%20Identity%20in%20the%20Films%20of%20Andrei%20Tarkovsky&offset=0](https://discover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_ALMA51620829280003606&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20search%20Engine&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,Autobiography,%20Memory%20and%20Identity%20in%20the%20Films%20of%20Andrei%20Tarkovsky&offset=0)  
 Prokhorov, Alexander, ed. *Springtime for Soviet Cinema: Re/Viewing the 1960s*.  
 Stites, Richard. "Springtime for Khrushchev 1953-1964" from *Russian Popular Culture: Entertainment and Society since 1900* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1992)  
[https://discover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_ALMA21509002880003606&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20search%20Engine&isFrbr=true&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,Russian%20Popular%20Culture:%20Entertainment%20and%20Society%20since%201900&sortby=rank&facet=frbrgroupid,include,69431487&offset=0](https://discover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_ALMA21509002880003606&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20search%20Engine&isFrbr=true&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,Russian%20Popular%20Culture:%20Entertainment%20and%20Society%20since%201900&sortby=rank&facet=frbrgroupid,include,69431487&offset=0)  
 Troianovskii, Vitalii, ed. *Kinematograf ottepli. Kniga pervaiia* (1996); *Kinematograf ottepli. Kniga vtoraia* (2002)

- Tumarkin, Nina. *The Living And The Dead: The Rise And Fall Of The Cult Of World War II In Russia* (New York, NY : Basic Books, 1994)  
[https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_ALMA51529603500003606&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,The%20Living%20And%20The%20Dead:%20The%20Rise%20And%20Fall%20Of%20The%20Cult%20Of%20World%20War%20II%20In%20Russia&offset=0](https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_ALMA51529603500003606&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,The%20Living%20And%20The%20Dead:%20The%20Rise%20And%20Fall%20Of%20The%20Cult%20Of%20World%20War%20II%20In%20Russia&offset=0)
- Oukaderova, Lida, *The Cinema of the Soviet Thaw: Space, Materiality, Movement*. Indiana, 2017.
- Woll, Josephine. *Real Images: Soviet Cinema and the Thaw*  
 Woll, Josephine. *The Cranes are Flying* (London : I.B. Tauris, 2003)  
[https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_ALMA21383496320003606&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,wooll%20the%20cranes%20are%20flying&offset=0](https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_ALMA21383496320003606&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,wooll%20the%20cranes%20are%20flying&offset=0)
- Youngblood, Denise. *Russian War Films: On the Cinema Front 1914-2005* (University Press of Kansas, 2007)  
[https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_ALMA21438516560003606&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,.%20Russian%20War%20Films:%20On%20the%20Cinema%20Front%201914-&offset=0](https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_ALMA21438516560003606&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,.%20Russian%20War%20Films:%20On%20the%20Cinema%20Front%201914-&offset=0)

## 5. Russian Cinema from Perestroika to the Present

This topic examines the principal trends and figures in Russian filmmaking since the introduction of *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Principal figures here are Nikita Mikhalkov, Kira Muratova, Aleksei Balabanov, Aleksandr Sokurov, Aleksei German, Jr, Andrei Zviagintsev as well as young filmmakers who rise to prominence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, such as Aleksei Popogrebskii, Boris Khlebnikov, Vasilii Sigarev, Kantemir Balagov, and Natal'ia Meshchaninova. Issues to be addressed in lectures include: changes in the cultural institutions and market conditions that regulate film production and distribution; the rise, decline and resurrection of *chernukha*; the influence of 'documentary style' on feature film making; the quest for new settings, new stories and new acting styles after the end of communism.

### Core viewing:

- German, *Moi drug Ivan Lapshin* (My Friend Ivan Lapshin, 1984); *Khrustalev, mashinu!* (Khrustalev, my car!, 1998); and possibly *Trudno byt' bogom* (2013? 2014?)  
 Abuladze, *Pokaianie* (Repentance, 1985)  
 Soloviev, *Assa* (1987)  
 Nugmanov, *Igla* (The Needle, 1988); *Dikii vostok* (The Wild East, 1993)  
 Pichul, *Malen'kaia Vera* (Little Vera, 1988)  
 Sokurov, *Krug vtoroi* (1990); *Russkii kovcheg* (Russian Ark, 2002); *Telets* (Taurus, 2001)  
 Rogozhkin, *Chekist* (1992), *Osobennosti natsional'noi okhoty* (1995)  
 Livnev, *Serp i molot* (1994)

Mikhalkov, *Utomlennye solntsem* (Burnt by the Sun, 1994), *Sibirskii Tsiryulnik* (*The Barber of Siberia*, 1998), *12* (2007)  
 Khotinenko, *Musul'manin* (The Muslim, 1995)  
 Balabanov, *Brat* (Brother, 1997), *Brat 2* (*Brother 2*, 2000), *Cargo 200* (**content warning: contains scenes of gruesome violence**)  
 Zviagintsev, *Vozvrashchenie* (The Return, 2003)  
 Muratova, *Nastroishchik* (The Tuner, 2004)  
 Khlebnikov, *Svobodnoe plavanie* (Free Floating, 2006); possibly: *Dolgaia schastlivaia zhizn'* (A Long Happy Life, 2013)  
 Todorovskii, *Stiliagi* (Hipsters, 2008)  
 Valeria Gai Germanika, *Vse umrut, a ia ostanus* (*Everybody Dies But Me*, 2008)  
 Sigarev, *Volchok* (Wolfie, 2009)  
 Mamuliia, *Drugoe nebo* (Another sky, 2010)  
 Loban, *Shapito-Shou* (Chapiteau-Show, 2011)  
 Meshchaninova, *Kombinat "Nadezhda"* (*Hope Factory*, 2014)  
 Balagov, *Tesnota* (Closeness, 2017), *Dylda* (*Beanpole*, 2019)  
 Fedorchenko, *Angely revolutsii* (*Angels of Revolution*, 2014), *Posledniia "Milaia Bolgaria"* (*The Last Darling Bulgaria*, 2021)  
 Khrzhanovskiy, *DAU. Natasha* (2020, **content warning: contains scenes of gruesome violence**)  
 Konchalovsky, *Dorogie Tovarishchi!* (*Dear Comrades!* 2020)

*Core reading:*

Borenstein, Eliot. *Overkill: Sex and Violence in Contemporary Russian Popular Culture* (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2008)  
[https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM\\_ALMA51617914390003606&context=L&vid=44CAM\\_PROD&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=SCOP\\_CAM\\_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&isFrbr=true&tab=cam\\_lib\\_coll&query=any,contains,overkill%20borenstein&sortby=rank&facet=frbrgroupid,include,63291402&offset=0](https://idiscover.lib.cam.ac.uk/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=44CAM_ALMA51617914390003606&context=L&vid=44CAM_PROD&lang=en_US&search_scope=SCOP_CAM_ALL&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&isFrbr=true&tab=cam_lib_coll&query=any,contains,overkill%20borenstein&sortby=rank&facet=frbrgroupid,include,63291402&offset=0)  
 Condee, Nancy. *The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema* (Oxford, 2009)  
 Isakava, Volha. "Reality Excess: Chernukha Cinema in the late 1980s," in *Ruptures and Continuities in Soviet/Russian Cinema: Styles, Characters and Genres Before and After the Collapse of the USSR* (Routledge, 2017)  
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315559278-10/reality-excess-volha-isakava-birgit-beumers?context=ubx&refId=6c1c1ca8-4010-4b90-80cc-54393e154c0e>

*Additional viewing:*

Balabanov, *Schastlivye* (Happy Days, 1991); *Ia tozhe khochu* (Me too, 2012)  
 Muratova, *Astenicheskii sindrom* (Aesthetic Syndrome, 1989); and (if I can find a copy) *Vechnoe vozvrashchenie* (2012)  
 Rogozhkin, *Blokpost* (Checkpoint, 1998), *Kukushka* (Cuckoo, 2002)  
 Popogrebskii, *Prostye veshchi* (Simple things, 2007); *Kak ia proved etim letom* (How I Ended Last Summer, 2010)  
 Khlebnikov, *Sumasshedshaia pomoshch'* (Insane Assistance, 2009)  
 Sigarev, *Zhit'* (Live, 2012)

Sokurov, *Dni zatmenii* (Days of Eclipse, 1988), *Otets i syn* (2003)

*Recommended background reading:*

Baer, Nicholas, Maggie Hennefeld, Laura Horak, Gunnar Iversen, *Unwatchable* (Rutgers, 2019)

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.36019/9780813599625/html>

*Additional Reading:*

Jones, Polly. Introduction to *Myth, Memory, Trauma: Rethinking the Stalinist Past in the Soviet Union* (Yale University Press, 2013): 1-16

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vkvfn>

Doane, Mary Anne. "The Voice in the Cinema: The Articulation of Body and Space," *Yale French Studies*, No. 60, Cinema/Sound (1980), pp. 33-50 (18 pages)

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2930003>

**TEACHING:**

Teaching will comprise 16 lectures, 5 revision seminars and 10 fortnightly supervisions over the course of Michaelmas, Easter and Lent terms. The paper will consist of five topics; three lectures and one revision seminar will be devoted to each topic. Students are also urged to attend the general lectures on film analysis that are given as part of CS6 in Michaelmas term.

**ASSESSMENT**

Students in Parts IB and II will be assessed by examination at the end of Easter Term. The exam consists of two sections. Students will answer three questions, at least one from each section. In Section A candidates are asked to compare the works of a single director. Questions are phrased so that they may be answered with reference to the works of many different directors studied in the course. In Section B students are asked to compare the works of two or more directors with reference to a wide range of thematic, theoretical and historical questions. These questions will not be limited to a single topic as outlined above, although it will be possible to answer most questions with reference only to the films and issues addressed within a single topic. The course has been deliberately structured to enable students to pursue and develop their individual interests across genres, periods and theoretical questions. A sample exam paper is available on the CamTools site for this course.

Students in Part 1B may choose to submit a portfolio of essays in lieu of sitting the final examination, but should discuss their plans to do so with their supervisor at the start of the Michaelmas term. Students in Part II may choose to submit an Optional Dissertation in lieu of sitting a final examination; any students considering the Optional Dissertation should consult with the course convenor over the summer about preparatory research and possible supervisors.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Historical knowledge and cultural awareness: This paper will familiarize students with the development of one of the world's most influential cinematic traditions in its historical context. Students will also acquire a deeper and more nuanced understanding

of Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet cultural processes and social forces from the 1900s through the present. At the end of the course they should be able to perceive both significant continuities and differences across five key historical periods.

2. Theoretical and methodological skills: Lectures, secondary readings and supervision assignments will develop students' abilities to think analytically about visual material in historical and theoretical contexts.

3. Russian language skills: Working intensively with films will improve students' listening comprehension and expand their vocabulary in Russian. Students will also develop reading skills and expand their vocabulary through the study of filmmakers' manifestos and related critical writing in Russian.

## LECTURE SCHEDULE

### Michaelmas

**1. From Boulevard to Avant-Garde 1: Pre-revolutionary Cinema (EKW)**

Core viewing: *Posle smerti* (Bauer, 1915), *Zhizn' za zhizn'* (Bauer, 1915)

**2. From Boulevard to Avant-Garde 2: Kuleshov, Americanism and Montage (EKW)**

Core viewing: *Neob'ychainye prikliucheniia Mistera Vesta v strane Bolshevikov* (Kuleshov, 1924), *Stachka* (Eisenstein, 1924), *Shinel'* (Kozintsev and Trauberg, 1926)

**3. From Boulevard to Avant-Garde 3: The Revolutionary Avant-Garde and their Others (EKW)**

Core viewing: *Bronenosets Potemkin* (Eisenstein, 1926), *Oblomok imperii* (Ermler, 1929), *Aelita* (Protazanov, 1924)

**4. From Silence to Sound 1: The Factory of the Eccentric Actor (EKW)**

Core Viewing: *Novyi vavilon* (1929), *Odna* (1931)

**5. From Silence to Sound 2: Eisenstein (EKW)**

Core viewing: *Brononosets Potemkin* (1926), *Ivan Groznyi* (Parts I and II)

**6. From Silence to Sound 3: Vertov (EKW)**

Core viewing: *Chelovek s kinoapparatom* (1929), *Tri pesni o Lenine*

**7. The Other Soviet Classics 1: The Shift to Socialist Realism (EKW)**

Core viewing: *Strogii iunosha* (1936), *Okraina* (Barnet, 1933), *Chapaev* (Vasiliev brothers, 1935)

**8. The Other Soviet Classics 2: Musicals (EKW)**

*Volga Volga* (Aleksandrov, 1938), *Svetlyi put'* (Aleksandrov, 1938), *Kubanskiye kazaki* (Pyr'ev, 1939).



## Lent

### 1. **The Other Soviet Classics 3 (DE)**

Core Viewing: *Letchiki* (Raizman, 1935), *Partiinyi bilet* (Pyr'ev, 1936) *Povest o nastoiashchem cheloveke* (Stolper, 1948), *Padenie Berlina* (Chiaureli, 1950),

### 2. **Soviet Cinema After Stalin 1 (DE)**

Core viewing: *Letiat zhuravli* (Kalatozov, 1957), *Ballada o soldate* (Chukhrai, 1959), *Ivanovo detstvo* (Tarkovsky, 1962)

### 3. **Soviet Cinema After Stalin 2 (DE)**

Core viewing: *Mne dvadsat' let* (Khutsiev, 1965), *Iul'ski dozhd'* (Khutsiev, 1967), *Kryl'ia* (Shepitko, 1966), *Korotkie vstrechi* (Muratova, 1967), *Komissar* (Askol'dov, 1967)

### 4. **Soviet Cinema After Stalin 3 (DE):**

Core viewing: *Istoria Asi Kliachinoi* (Konchalovsky, 1966), *Tema* (Panfilov, 1979), *Chelovek ukhodit za ptistami* (Khamraev, 1975), *Tsvet granata* (Parajanov, 1969), *Zerkalo* (Tarkovksy, 1974), *Voskhozhdenie* (Shepit'ko, 1977)

### 5. **Russian Cinema from Perestroika to the Present 1 (DE): Rock Films, Reckonings, and Chernukha**

Core viewing: *Pokaianie* (Abuladze, 1985), *Moi drug Ivan Lapshin* (German, 1984), *ASSA* (1987), *Igla* (1989)

### 6. **Russian Cinema from Perestroika to the Present 2 (DE): the Wild 90s**

Core viewing: *Astenicheskii Sindrom* (Muratova, 1989), *Serp i molot* (Livnev, 1994), *Utomlennye Solntsem* (1994), *Brat* (Balabanov, 1997), *Blokpost* (Rogozhkin, 1998)

### 7. **Russian Cinema from Perestroika to the Present 3(DE): the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Core viewing: *Koktebel* (Khlebnikov, Popogrebskii, 2002), *Vozvraschenie* (Zvyagintsev, 2002), *Tesnota* (Balagov, 2017), *DAU. Natasha* (Khrzhanovsky, 2020), *Dylda* (Balagov 2019), *Poslednia "Milaia Bolgaria"* (Fedorchenko, 2020), *Dorogie Tovarishchi!* (Konchalovsky, 2020).

### 8. Revision Seminar

## Easter.

1. Revision Seminar
2. Revision Seminar
3. Revision Seminar
4. Revision Seminar

## **SUPERVISION SCHEDULE**

### **General Guidelines for Essays:**

1400-1500 words. Provide a filmography and bibliography of works cited and consulted. Citations may be parenthetical within the text, i.e. (Morley 2002, 35) would refer to an article or book by Morley, published in 2002, page 35. The bibliography must contain full publication information for all works cited and/or consulted. If you only cite one work by Morley you may omit the year of publication in your parenthetical reference.

A successful essay will offer a precise, carefully structured and narrowly focused argument that is based on detailed analysis of one or two films from the silent era. Remember to avoid the pitfalls of plot summary in your essays: all descriptive statements should also be analytic: When X (evidence) happens, it indicates Z (claim), because Y (your analysis.).

You need not (indeed, you should not) discuss every aspect of the film(s) you choose to discuss in your essay. Instead, select one or more key sequences and analyze them in the context of the film as a whole and/or the director's writings about film. Please refer to the worksheet developed by Anton Kaes and Eric Rentschler for guidance on aspects of sequence analysis (see "Essential Background Reading" on p.4). Lectures will include examples of sequence analysis as well.

You must provide visual evidence to support your points, so you will need to re-view the film you choose to analyze (at least in part) in order to make a sufficiently detailed argument.

### **\*For all supervisions:**

**a) Please submit your essays and commentaries to your supervisor no later than 48 hours before the supervision.**

a) Please let your supervision partner know which films you will be discussing in your essay as soon as you select them, so that s/he will have time to watch at least one (if not all) of them before the supervision.

b) Email your supervision partner your essay when it is finished. Read and prepare comments on your partner's essay when it arrives.

## **MICHAELMAS TERM SUPERVISION SCHEDULE**

### **Supervision one: From Avant-garde to Boulevard**

Your essay may compare the work of two different directors OR two works by a single director, but you should come to the supervision prepared to discuss at least one pre-revolutionary and one post-revolutionary silent film.

**Supervisions two and three: From Silence to Sound: FEKS, Eisenstein, Vertov**

For one supervision you should focus your essay on the work of a single director or collective. For the other, you may write either a comparative essay or another essay examining the work of a single director. This is not the only topic that is conducive to the study of a single director's work, but it is one of the best opportunities you will have to think about the early Soviet film director as *auteur*. In each essay you should write about at least two films in some detail, but you will want to frame them with reference to other works—theoretical writings and/or films—by the directors you choose to study.

**Supervision four: Popular Cinema in the Stalin Era**

Essays and supervisions for this topic should compare films either within or across genre categories (i.e. musicals, war films, 'easterns', biopics, romantic comedies, melodramas)

**LENT TERM SUPERVISION SCHEDULE**

**Supervision 1:** Students choose one of the following options:

- a) Continue work on Topic 3, working with a different set of films and theoretical approaches than in the final supervision of Michaelmas.
- b) Write a comparative essay, examining at least one film made before 1953 and one made after 1956.
- c) Move entirely into Topic 4 (see essay titles below) and write an essay that analyzes two Thaw-era films.

**Supervision 2: Essay** analyzing at least two films set for Topic 4 OR --if you did not select option (b) above-- an essay comparing at least one at least one film made before 1953 and one made after 1956.

**Supervision 3:** Essay analyzing at least two films set for Topic 5.

**Supervision 4:** First (of 3) revision supervisions. This supervision may be postponed the final few days of Lent term OR week 0 of Easter, but it is better to try to do it in Lent. It becomes very difficult to fit 3 revision supervisions into the 4 weeks of Easter term.

## ESSAY TITLES PER TOPIC

### TOPIC 1: Guidelines for Essays

The titles listed below are deliberately open and broadly formulated. **You should formulate a much NARROWER argument about specific works that engages with the key concepts of each title.** Feel free not only to polemicize with the title, but also to reformulate it in more specific terms that are relevant to the films and issues you choose to discuss.

### TOPIC 1: Essay Titles

1. 'Silent cinema both asserts and challenges the authority of vision as a source of accurate knowledge about the world.' Discuss with reference to at least two films from the silent era.
2. Select a single motif or narrative pattern in the work of a single filmmaker and analyze its use and significance in at least two films.
3. 'Even the most seemingly frivolous Russian films are imbued with political significance after 1917.' Discuss with reference to at least two films from the silent era.
4. 'Aesthetic choices and political convictions are linked in the work of many Russian filmmakers.' Discuss with reference to at least two films from the silent era.
5. Compare and contrast the ways in which silent cinema maps social conflicts in terms of sexual desire in at least two films, one made before 1917 and one made after. Remember that you must address this topic in terms of visual detail (i.e. do not rely on plot summary alone.)
6. Compare and contrast the function of cross-cutting in any two films of the silent era.
7. 'Every formal parallel marks both a contrast and a similarity.' Discuss with reference to at least two films from the silent era.
8. 'Melodrama inscribes the body in distress with meaning.' Discuss with reference to at least two films from the silent era.
9. 'Early Soviet cinema rejected both the formal and the thematic foci of its pre-revolutionary predecessors.' Discuss with reference to the work of at least one pre-revolutionary and one post-revolutionary filmmaker. (To answer this question successfully, you will need to limit your discussion to detailed analysis of a single cluster of closely related formal and thematic features)
10. 'Every change in film history implies a change in its address to the spectator, and each period constructs its spectator in a new way.' Discuss with reference to the work of at least one pre-revolutionary and one post-revolutionary filmmaker.
11. 'Spectacle and narrative—that is, showing and telling, astonishing and informing—are often at odds in the cinema of the silent era.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.
12. 'The origins of avant-garde cinematic practices are discernible in the popular cinema of the pre-revolutionary period.' Discuss with reference to the work of at least one pre-revolutionary and one post-revolutionary filmmaker.
13. 'Objects speak more loudly than words in the cinema of the silent era.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.
14. 'Meaning is produced not within the shot, but in the juxtaposition of one shot with another.' Discuss with reference to at least two films from the silent era.

## TOPIC 2: Guidelines for Essays:

Key issues to consider as you think through the work of these three directors/collectives are the following:

- a) How does their work evolve over time: which images, issues, visual strategies persist? which are abandoned? how does the later work differ most distinctively from the earlier work?
- b) How does each negotiate the shift from silent to sound cinema? How do they imagine the shift will take place? How do they subsequently implement it in their work?
- c) How does each respond to political pressures, historical change and/or cultural fashion in his work?
- d) How do they respond to one another's work--both explicitly and implicitly?
- e) How does their 'theory' match with their 'practice'?

### Topic 2 Essay Titles:

Please note: As this topic is intended to allow you to focus in depth on the work of a single director/collective, you are encouraged to craft your own essay title for at least one of the supervisions. You are not required to do so, but the experience of formulating your own topic and argument, rather than relying on one of the titles provided is good preparation for the exam. In any event, you should be sure to articulate your OWN ideas in your response.

1. Select a key theoretical concept from the writings of Eisenstein or Vertov; analyze it and discuss its significance for two or more of their works. If you wish, you may choose to contrast them with one another OR with FEKS in relation to this concept.
2. 'The mark of the *auteur* is his or her reliance on *ostranenie*.' Discuss with reference to at least two films. (bearing in mind Shklovsky's discussion of *ostranenie* in 'Art as Device').
3. ' Films rewrite history not only in their spoken dialogue and intertitles, but also in their camerawork and editing choices.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.
4. 'Sound does not expand a film's expressive range; it limits it.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.
5. 'The formal innovations of avant-garde filmmakers in the 1920s were based in theories about the nature of human perception.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.
6. 'In the 1920s Soviet filmmakers based their practice on theories that they were

compelled to modify or discard entirely in the 1930s.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.

7. How do Vertov's films "expose" (or, in Formalist terms, 'bare the device' of) cinematic technologies? To what extent do his films support Vertov's contention that "the Cine-Eye" is "more perfect than the human eye for examining the chaos of visual phenomena" and that the "Cine-Eye....perceives and fixes its impressions in a completely different way from that of the human eye"?
8. Compare and contrast the theory and practice of montage in at least two films. You may choose to work with films from the early and later work of a single filmmaker OR with works by different filmmakers working at roughly the same time.
9. Compare and contrast the ways in which any two or more films by Vertov, Eisenstein or FEKS narrate the past. Make sure your essay addresses the specifically cinematic means by which the films you choose approach the past. You may find Hayden White's essay on 'historiophoty' of interest here (or not).
10. 'Cinema is the art of organizing moving objects in space.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.
11. What changes and what remains the same in the work that filmmakers produce before and after 1932? Discuss with reference to at least two films. Bear in mind that you cannot discuss everything in your essay. Select a single aspect-- technological, political, narrative—and focus on it.
12. How do filmmakers construct relationships between the 'old' and the 'new' in visual terms? Discuss with reference to at least two films. Do not write a 'list' or 'catalogue': make a narrowly focused argument.
13. 'All violence is allegorical'. Discuss with reference to at least two films.
14. 'Propaganda educates and transforms; agitation mobilizes. For this reason film – propaganda and film-agitation deploy very different visual and narrative strategies.' Discuss with reference to at least two films.
15. Compare and contrast the ways in which any two of these filmmakers made the transition from silence to sound.

### TOPIC THREE: Guidelines for Essays

The list of suggested films below organizes films you might want to discuss for this topic by genre (note that some appear in several categories). These classifications are intended primarily to give you a sense of which films you might want to watch and the kind of theoretical reading on which you might choose to focus. Please note that not all of these films were released to universal acclaim. You should aim EITHER to watch several films from a single category OR at least one from each. Films with a single asterisk are those the course conveners consider most central to this topic, but you are free to watch and write about any films on this list, asterisked or not. Films with a double asterisk are particularly useful if you want to think about the construction of gender in this period.

#### Historical-Revolutionary/ Biopics:

- \*Vasil'ev Brothers, *Chapaev* (1934)
- Kozintsev and Trauberg, *Iunost' Maksima* (The Youth of Maksim, 1935)
- \*\*Kheifitz and Zarkhi, *Chlen pravitel'stva* (A Member of the Government, 1939);
- \*Romm, *Lenin v 1918 g.* (1939, Lenin in 1918); *Lenin v Oktiabre* (Lenin in October, 1937)
- Kalatozov, *Valerii Chkalov* (1939)
- \*Kheifitz and Zarkhi, *Chlen pravitel'stva* (A Member of the Government, 1939)
- Donskoi, *Kak zakalialas' stal'* (1942)
- \*\*Stolper, *Povest' o nastoiashchem cheloveke* (Tale about a Real Man, 1948)
- \*Chiaureli, *Padenie Berlina* (1949, Fall of Berlin)
- Raizman, *Kaval'er zolotoi zvezdy* (1950)

#### Musicals:

- Aleksandrov, *Veselye rebiata* (Jolly Fellows, 1934); *Tsirk* (Circus, 1936), *Svetlyi put'* (Bright Path, 1938), *\*Volga-Volga* (1938), *\*\*Vesna* (Spring, 1947)
- Pyr'ev, *\*/\*\*Traktoristy* (Tractor Drivers, 1939); *Svinarka i Pastukh* (The Swinemaid and the Shepherd, 1941); *\*Skazanie o zemle sibirskoi* (Tale of the Siberian Lands, 1948); *Kubanskii Kazaki* (Cossacks of the Kuban, 1950);

#### Romantic dramas and comedies :

- \*\*Room, *Strogii ionosha* (A Strict Youth, 1934)
- Barnet, *U samogo sinego moria* (By The Bluest Sea, 1936)
- \*\*Raizman, *Letchiki* (Pilots, 1935); *Mashen'ka* (1942); *\*\*Poezd idet na vostok* (1947)
- Medvedkin, *Novaia Moskva* (New Moscow, 1938)
- \*/\*\*Iudin, *Devushka s kharakterom* (A Girl with Character, 1939)
- \*/\*\*Timoshenko, *Nebesnyi tikhokhod* (Celestial Slowpoke, 1945)

#### Melodramas (this is a tricky classification):

- \*Ekk, *Putevka v zhizn'* (Road to Life, 1931)
- Vasil'ev Brothers, *Chapaev* (1934)
- \*\*Room, *Strogii ionosha* (A Strict Youth, 1934)
- Pyr'ev, *Partiinyi билет* (Party Card, 1936);
- Donskoi, *Kak zakalialas' stal'* (1942);
- Ermler, *Ona zashchishchaet rodinu* (She defends the Motherland, 1943)
- \*Stolper, *Povest' o nastoiashchem cheloveke* (Tale about a Real Man, 1948)

War films:

- \*Barnet, *Okraina* (Outskirts, 1933);
- Vasil'ev Brothers, *Chapaev* (1934)
- Raizman, *Mashen'ka* (1942);
- \*Ermler, *Ona zashchishchaet rodinu* (She defends the Motherland, 1943)
- Donskoi, *Kak zakalialas' stal'* (1942); *Nepokorennye* (The Undeclared, 1945)
- \*\*Timoshenko, *Nebesnyi tikhokhod* (Celestial Slowpoke, 1945)
- Stolper, *Povest' o nastoiashchem cheloveke* (Tale about a Real Man, 1948)
- \*Chiaureli, *Padenie Berlina* (1949, Fall of Berlin)

'Easterns'

- Romm, *Trinadtsat'* (Thirteen, 1936)
- Iudin, *Smelye liudi* (Daring people, 1950)

Detective/spy films

- Pyr'ev, *Partiinyi bilet* (Party Card, 1936);
- Macheret, *Oshibka inzhenera Kochina* (Engineer Kochin's Mistake, 1939)
- Aleksandrov, *Vstrecha na El'be* (Meeting on the Elba, 1949)

**TOPIC THREE. Essay Titles:**

1. 'Stalinist cinema was neither pure "entertainment" nor mere "propaganda".' Discuss with reference to Russian and/or Soviet cinema; make sure you provide a very clear definition of how you understand the key terms of this topic. You may choose to ground your discussion in historical and/or theoretical references.
2. 'The conventions of popular film genres--whether melodrama, musical, detective, cowboy--were readily adapted to the ideological aims of Soviet and/or post-Soviet filmmakers.' Discuss with reference to Russian and/or Soviet cinema.'
3. 'All laughter is subversive.' Discuss with reference to Russian and/or Soviet cinema.'
4. 'Melodrama inscribes the body in distress with meaning.' Discuss with reference to Russian and/or Soviet cinema. You will find Peter Brooks' essay on melodrama in film (on CamTools) useful in thinking about this topic.
5. 'Analyze two Stalin-era musicals with reference to EITHER Richard Dyer's theory of utopia and entertainment OR Rick Altman's discussion of the musical as dual-focus narrative'. [Key extracts from their writing on this topic are posted on CamTools].
6. 'Compare and contrast the ways in which Stalin-era *Bildungsfilms* present the formation of a "new" Soviet subjectivity. You may wish to approach this topic from the prism of social origin, gender difference or generation.
7. 'Cinema in the Stalin era emulated the West in order to critique its values.'



8. 'Плох тот коммунист, который лишен способности мечтать. Мечта коммуниста — не есть отлет от земного, а полет в будущее'.  
[LUNACHARSKII]

#### TOPIC 4. Guidelines for Essays

This is a topic that lends itself either to comparative analysis of multiple films along thematic lines (history, gender, subjectivity, generational conflict) or to the examination of work by a single filmmaker (Khutsiev, Muratova, Tarkovskii are the most logical choices, but others are possible). You may choose EITHER any question from Section A of the sample exam paper (posted on CamTools) OR any of the following OR you may make up your OWN essay title on a topic that interests you (but consult me about it first).

#### TOPIC 4: Essay Titles.

Discuss any one of the following with reference to at least two films made before 1985 if you expect to prepare this topic

1. 'All laughter is subversive.'
2. ' Films rewrite history not only in their plots (*fabula*) and dialogue, but also in their camerawork and editing choices.'
3. 'After 1953 Soviet filmmakers attempted to create a sense of *iskrennost*' through innovations in the visual form and narrative structure of their works.'
4. 'Gender roles were articulated in very different forms in Russian cinema after 1956.'
5. 'The voices and visions that appear on Soviet screens after 1956 differ from those of the Stalin era in their resistance to instant legibility and easy replication.' Discuss.
6. 'Soviet cinema during the Thaw reconfigures the possibilities for Soviet desire.' Discuss.
7. 'To reveal ideology as false is less powerful than to reveal it as meaningless.' Discuss with reference to post-Stalinist cinema.
8. 'Cinema of the Thaw era conceptualized the passage of time in ways that differed significantly from the temporalities of Stalinist cinema.'
9. 'The return of subjectivity is the defining feature of post-Stalinist culture.' Discuss with reference to cinema of the Thaw era.

10. 'Some histories are such that they cannot be named in words or represented on screen.'
11. 'Cinema of the post-Stalin period often borrows the iconography and/or rhetoric of Soviet mass culture in order to deconstruct it.'
12. 'The work of many late -Soviet and post-Soviet filmmakers attempts to preserve a vision of the Soviet past that is invisible in official art of the Soviet period.'
13. 'Late -Soviet and post-Soviet cinema is dominated by an attempt to reshape *both* the memories of the Soviet past *and* the forms in which that past may be commemorated.' Discuss.
14. "The look of Soviet cinema after 1953 is meaningful precisely because of the ways in which it differs from that of the Stalin era.'
15. 'Soviet cinema in the Thaw era aims for greater authenticity by foregrounding the artifice inherent in all cultural production.'

#### TOPIC 5: Essay Titles

1. "The return of physicality (bodies, sex, violence) in Perestroika cinema seeks to liberate the body but encounters a traumatic blockage in doing so."
2. "A reckoning with the memory of Stalinism is a common theme in Perestroika films, but each has to find their own solution."
3. "In late-Soviet youth cinema, a desire for escape can be found not only in themes but also in form."
4. "Socialist Realism outlived the Soviet Union."
5. "In early post-Soviet cinema, pastiche and parody affect a distance from the past, but sometimes they betray an enduring attachment to it."
6. "The formal and narrative contradictions of post-Soviet cinema can be read symptomatically in relation to nationalist ideology."
7. "A cinematic image of nostalgia is a double exposure, or a superimposition of two images — of home and abroad, of past and present, of dream and everyday life."  
(SVETLANA BOYM)
8. "Realism (naturalistic mise en scène and cinematography) is not the only the mode of representing historical truth in cinema."
9. "The representation of violence on screen, even extreme violence, can be ethical."



